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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/599,808	10/10/2006	Yosuke Endo	SAT-16887	4898
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RANKIN, HILL, & CLARK LLP				
38210 Glenn Avenue				
WILLOUGHBY, OH 44094-7808				
EXAMINER				
DANEGA, RENEE A				
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3736				
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/599,808

Applicant(s)

ENDO ET AL.

Examiner

RENEE DANEGA

Art Unit

3736

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 October 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/ICE)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 10/10/06
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 8 objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 8 uses improper antecedent basis when it refers to "the primitive motion variable". Base claim 1 does not contain a primitive motion variable. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Alastair et al. (US 3418662).
 - Regarding claim 1, Alastair teaches an external force control method for controlling an external force applied to an animal through an orthosis attached to the animal that makes a movement along with activities of the muscle fibers comprising a myoelectric potential measurement step of measuring a myoelectric potential that occurs in the body, and external force setting step of setting a value of an external force applied to the animal through the orthosis according to an external for function $f(x)$ with the myoelectric potential as a variable on the basis of the measured value of the myoelectric potential; a motion variable measurement step of measuring a motion variable varying with the motion of the animal under

the condition of the external force applied through the orthosis, a determining step for determining whether a deviation between the set value of the factor and target value is less than a reference value and an external force function setting step of setting a new external force function in such a way that the new set value of the factor approaches the target value if the deviation is equal or greater than the reference value of the determination step (Figure 1) (column 2, lines 40-62) (column 3, lines 6-65).

- Regarding claim 3, Alastair teaches the external for function step comprising finding the external force target value according to the factor function on the basis of the measured value of the motion variable and the target value of the factor and setting the external force function in such a way that the external force approaches the external force target value (claim 1).
- Regarding claim 12, Alastair teaches the method of determining to depend on the deviation being positive or negative relative to the threshold (column 5, lines 65-74).
- Regarding claim 13, this claim states the apparatus that performs the steps of the method of claim 1, thus the same rationale of rejection is applicable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 2, and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Alastair as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Curcie et al. (US 6660042).

- Regarding claim 2, Alastair doesn't teach the external force function setting step to comprise setting a coefficient that represents the relation between the myoelectric potential and the external force and setting the external force function according to a basic function of the myoelectric potential and coefficient. However, Curcie teaches a method for distributing forelimb forces in which each finger is assigned a coefficient or weight related to external force (Figure 2). It would have been obvious in view of Curcie to find coefficients in Alastair's method relating to myoelectric potential and force for each finger to individualize digit control.
- Regarding claim 5, Alastair doesn't teach omitting the determination step. However, Curcie teaches a method in which there is a training mode in which the function variables are determined in a training step and then the mode is switched to a use mode in which the equation for each finger remains constant (Figure 2). It would have been obvious in view of Curcie

to provide for determination to be omitted in Alastair's method in order to allow for repeated uniform actions.

6. Claims 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Alastair as applied to claims 3 and 1 above, and further in view of Haslam, II et al. (US 5413611).

- Regarding claim 4, Alastair doesn't teach the external force setting step comprise setting an external force function such that the maximum measured value of the external force approaches the maximum value of the target. However, Haslam teaches a force control method in which the external force is controlled in such a way that the maximum measured force approaches the maximum target (column 10, lines 27-35). It would have been obvious in view of Haslam to provide for the external force to not exceed the target force in Alastair's device as this could damage whatever object is being gripped.

7. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Alastair.

- Regarding claim 6, Alastair teaches the motion variable measurement to measure the resultant of internal and external forces and the factor setting to comprise setting a ratio (column 5 line 65- column 6 line 2) Alastair doesn't teach the range of the ratio; however one of ordinary skill would be able to optimize the range as claimed by applicant through routine experimentation.

8. Claims 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Alastair as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Kawai et al (US 20040107780).

- Regarding claims 7-8, Alastair doesn't teach the motion variable step to include measuring a primitive motion variable varying with the motion of the animal and measuring the motion according to inverse dynamics model nor the motion state being determined by the primitive motion variable relative to the motion state. However, Kawai teaches an external force control method in which primitive motion variables (26) are measured and inputted to an inverse dynamics model (70) along with motion state data (21, 22, 23) in order to determine the motion state (Figure 3). It would have been obvious in view of Kawai to use this method in Alastair's force control method in order to account for secondary forces that are effecting the resulting force execution.

9. Claims 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Alastair as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Davalli et al. (US 6740123).

- Regarding claim 9, Alastair doesn't teach the setting factor step depending on the measured values of external force and motion. However, Davalli teaches four band factors each depending from the bend of the wrist and EMG activity feedback which result in different force controls (Figure 3b). It would have been obvious in view of Davalli to provide for different

factors to be set for different external forces in Alastair's device in order to control different body parts.

- Regarding claim 10, Alastair doesn't teach the motion state determination step to depend in a primitive motion variable and a motion state wherein there is a new external force function responsive to each motion state. However, Davalli teaches motion state determination depending on a primitive motion variable (elbow bend) and motion state (elbow active) and a new force function for each motion state such as operate right and left wrists, flex and extend elbows (Figure 3b). It would have been obvious in view of Davalli to provide different force functions to correspond to different motion states in Alastair to provide for varying activity.
- Regarding claim 11, Alastair doesn't teach the determination step to comprise whether the deviating is less than the reference value on the basis of a target value factor for each motion state and the external force setting step comprising a new external force function on the basis of factor target value. However, Davalli teaches the determination step comprising whether the deviation is less than the reference value (bend or travel unit in figure) on the basis of three reads or factor target values that influence which force function is employed (Figure 3b).
- Regarding claim 14, Alastair and Davalli teach the limitations of the external force control utilizing myoelectric potential, external force setting, motion variable measurement, factor setting, determining, and setting an

external force function (see above). Alastair doesn't teach providing the functions on a computer program. However, Davalli teaches a processor with expansion properties (18) allowing additional programming instructions (Figure 2). It would have been obvious at the time of invention to provide a program to a computer to control the device.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to RENEE DANEGA whose telephone number is (571)270-3639. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday 7:30-5:00 eastern time.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Max Hindenburg can be reached on (571) 272-4726. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3736

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

RAD

/Max Hindenburg/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3736